

Message Text

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41

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 IO-13 SPM-01 SR-02 ORM-03 COME-00

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PRS-01 RSR-01 /191 W

----- 123321

R 171720Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1429

CDC ATLANTA

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 723

AFDROUGHT

EO 11652: NA

SUBJECT: CDC NUTRITIONAL SURVEY AS OF 8/5/73

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 690

SUMMARY: NUTRITION SURVEY IN MAURITANIA'S RIVER REGION (KAEDI, BOGHE, ROSSO) AND FURTHER SAMPLES IN PARTS OF SEVERELY AFFECTED FIFTH AND SIXTH REGIONS (ALEG, MEDERDRA) COMPLETED. LATTER SAMPLES SUPPORT PREVIOUSLY REPORTED SEVERE IMPACT OF DROUGHT IN FIFTH AND SIXTH REGIONS WITH ACUTE MALNUTRITION AS HIGH AS 50 PERCENT IN SOME CAMPS, FREQUENT CASES OF MARASMUS, BERI-BERI AFD SCURVY. DEATH RATE AVERAGE OF 3.6 PERCENT OVER THE PAST YEAR AMONG MEMBERS OF FAMILIES INTERVIEWED. LARGE SCALE POPULATION MIGRATIONS TOWARD THE CITIES IN THE SOUTHERN QUARTER OF THE COUNTRY EVIDENT. NOMADS (80 PERCENT OF POPULATION), BOTH MOOR AND PEULH, ARE THE GROUPS MOST UNCLASSIFIED

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SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED. IN CONTRAST, SEDENTARY BLACKS

(20 PERCENT OF POPULATION) LIVING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN RIVER REGION HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY SPARED. NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF CHILDREN IN A SINGLE NOMADIC CAMP STILL IN POSSESSION OF ITS CAMELS WAS EXCELLENT. THIS MAY WELL REPRESENT PRE-DROUGHT NUTRITIONAL BASELINE. MAJOR MEDICAL PROBLEMS IN THESE TWO REGIONS INCLUDE CHOLERA OUTBREAKS (ROSSO, MOUDJERIA) REPORTED REFTEL, WHOOPING COUGH EPIDEMICS (BOGHE, ALEG) AND HEPATITIS EPIDEMIC IN ALEG. MEDICAL PERSONNEL HAMPERED BY MEDICATION AND MANPOWER SHORTAGES, AS WELL AS LARGE DISTANCES BETWEEN DISPENSARIES AND OUTLYING ENCAMPMENTS. GOVT FOOD DISTRIBUTION EFFICIENT BUT QUANTITY INADEQUATE.

1. KAEDI: DUE TO LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES, ONLY ABLE TO SPEAK WITH DISPENSARY PHYSICIAN. NO FIELD WORK DONE. LOCAL MD REPORTS RELATIVELY LITTLE ACUTE MALNUTRITION AND VITAMIN DEFICIENCY DISEASES. MAJOR MEDICAL PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN SUSPECTED CHOLERA AND MEASLES EPIDEMIC WHICH HAS NOW ENDED. TOWN OF MOOUT 100 KM TO THE EAST REPORTEDLY SUSTAINED HEAVY MORTALITY DURING THIS MEASLES OUTBREAK BUT UNABLE TO VISIT FOR CONFIRMATION.

2. BOGHE: REMARKABLE CONTRAST BETWEEN CONDITION OF SEDENTARY INHABITANTS WHO CONTINUE TO FISH AND GARDEN ON SMALL SCALE AND NOMADS WHO HAVE COME TO THIS AREA. IN VILLAGE OF TOULDE, ACUTE MALNUTRITION RATE WAS 3 PERCENT AMONG VILLAGERS AND 30 PERCENT AMONG NOMADS CAMPED ADJACENT TO VILLAGE. RATES OF MARASMUS AND VITAMIN DEFICIENCY DISEASES LOW. EXAMINED MEMBERS OF NOMADIC TRIBE WHICH STILL HAD ITS CAMELS AND FOUND ACUTE MALNUTRITION RATE OF ZERO WITH 18 PERCENT OF CHILDREN ABOVE THE REFERENCE MEDIAN.

3. ALEG: IN HEART OF HARD HIT 5TH REGION. IN PATTERN BEING OBSERVED FREQUENTLY, NOMADS WHO HAVE PITCHED THEIR TENTS IN THE CITY ARE IN BETTER CONDITION THAN THOSE WHOSE ENCAMPMENTS FURTHER AWAY. GIRM HAS TRIED TO ENCOURAGE CONGREGATION OF NOMADS NEAR THE CITIES BUT HAS NOT MET WITH MUCH SUCCESS. IN THE CITY, 11 PERCENT OF CHILDREN BELOW 80 PERCENT STUART-MEREDITH WHILE IN OUTLYING CAMP 17 PERCENT WERE IN THIS CATEGORY. MARASMUS RATES IN THESE TWOM253 2.8 PERCENT AND 17.1 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY. HERE, UNCLASSIFIED

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AS IN MOST PLACES, FOOD DISTIRUBTION HAS BEEN EFFICIENT BUT INADEQUATE IN QUANTITY. AVERAGE OF 6 KG. MILLET AND 1 KG POWDERED MILK PER PERSON PER MONTH.

4. ROSSO: TWO CLUSTERS OF SEDENTARY WOLOF TRIBESMEN EXAMINED. BOTH HAD LOW ACUTE MALNUTRITION RATES (10 PERCENT), LOW CHRONIC MALNUTRITION AND ONLY OCCASIONAL CASES OF MARASMUS AND AVITAMINOSES. LOW DEATH RATES AS WELL. THIS IS TYPICAL

OF SEDENTARY INHABITANTS OF THE RIVER REGION. SHARP CONTRAST SEEN IN TRIBE OF PEULH SHEPHERDS IN WHICH 52 PERCENT OF CHILDREN EXAMINED FELL BELOW 80 PERCENT STUART-MEREDITH. THEY HAD RECEIVED ONLY ONE FOOD DISTRIBUTION (THERE HAVE BEEN 5 NATIONWIDE SINCE THE INITIATION OF THE RELIEF EFFORT) LESS THAN 5 KG GRAIN PER PERSON PER MONTH. CHOLERA CASE RATE IN THIS AREA DECLINING. LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF NEW TENT CAMPS NORTH OF ROSSO ALONG THE ROAD TO NOUAKCHOTT. HEALTH AND NUTRITION IN THESE CAMPS SIMILAR TO POOR CONDITIONS IN NEW CAMPS STUDIED AT RKIZ, BOUTILIMIT, ALEG AND MEDERDRA.

5. MEDERDRA: THREE CLUSTERS EXAMINED. ACUTE MALNUTRITION MODERATELY SEVERE (14 PERCENT) ALTHOUGH FOR LOGISTIC REASONS WE WERE UNABLE TO VISIT WHAT WERE REPORTEDLY THE MOST SEVERELY AFFECTED CAMPS. RATES FOR BOTH MARASMUS AND AVITAMINOSES IN 8-9 PERCENT RANGE. FOOD DISTRIBUTION HAS BEEN RELATIVELY EFFICIENT, BUT AGAIN INADEQUATE IN QUANTITY (5-7 KG GRAIN PER PERSON PER MONTH). DISPENSARY REPORTS SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF CASES OF VITAMIN A DEFICIENCY AS WELL AS SCURVY AND BERI-BERI.

6. TO DATE 26 CLUSTERS SAMPLED IN 7 LOCALITIES. IN EXCESS OF 800 SUBJECTS EXAMINED. EXPECT TO VISIT 4 MORE LOCALITIES (IN NORTHERN AND EASTERN MAURITANIA) AND OBTAIN AT LEAST 12 ADDITIONAL CLUSTERS.

7. CHOLERA: ROSSO CASE COUNT (AS OF 8/13/73) 88 TOTAL CASES WITH 14 DEATHS. NO NEW CASES REPORTED FROM MOUDJERIA SINCE LAST REPORT.

8. DENOMINATOR DATA AND DUPLICATE COPY OF SURVEY DATA POUCHED TO CDC. SHURTLEFF

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